

To: Mark E. Souder, (IN-03) Chairman
Members of Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy and Human Resources
Committee on Government Reform
United States House of Representatives
109th Congress

From: Monty L. Patterson

Date: June 12, 2006

Re: Query Concerning Susan Wood's Testimony
Hearing Entitled "RU-486 – Demonstrating a Low Standard for Women's Health?"

I question if there are ethical issues and a potential conflict of interest surrounding Susan F. Wood, PhD, testifying at the Subcommittee Hearing on May 17, 2006. Susan Wood, former FDA Assistant Commissioner for Women's Health, failed to state affiliations with the pro-abortion advocacy organizations which she currently represents.

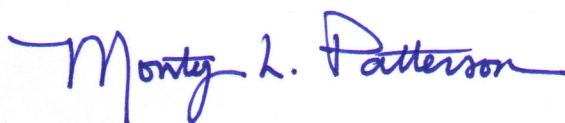
Susan Wood is currently a Senior Policy Advisor to the Reproductive Health Technologies Project (RHTP). This organization, founded in 1988 by Marie Bass, a former political director of the National Abortion Rights Action League and Joanne Howes, a former lobbyist for Planned Parenthood Federation of America, spearheaded an aggressive campaign to bring RU-486 to the United States prior to FDA approval. As an abortion-rights advocacy group, they have targeted the medical community, Congress, women's groups, the media and the general public to build support for RU-486 in this country today. RHTP has formed critical alliances with the abortion advocacy community such as Gynuity Health Projects, IPAS, the National Abortion Federation, and the National Women's Health Network. Following her FDA resignation, with support from the Open Society Institute, RHTP launched the Dr. Susan Wood: FDA Hero Speaking Tour to pro-choice abortion groups and providers such as Planned Parenthood, National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL), American College of Obstetrics & Gynecology (ACOG), and Family Planning Advocates.

Without disclosing her affiliation with RHTP, it is my opinion that Susan Wood's testimony lacked both credibility and professionalism. As a professional, she did not display an ethical responsibility to society, her colleagues nor herself. Moreover, Susan Wood does not have formal training as a medical doctor. She is a Doctor of Philosophy in Biology. Although her scientific training as a PhD in Biology is not representative of a medical doctor, Planned Parenthood of America's website displays a "Meet Dr. Susan Wood" narrative which implies her credentials are in the medical profession. Seemingly, Susan Wood has allowed an organization which supports her to knowingly misrepresent her credentials. Furthermore, by continuing to use her former FDA title without disclosing her current affiliations and bias to the pro-abortion organizations which she now represents, Susan Wood exploits that official capacity for professional and personal benefit.

Susan Wood's stated core commitment, to improving and advancing women's health is troublesome, in light of the fact, she challenges credible scientific and medical opinion that RU-486 when used for early medical pregnancy termination may predispose healthy women to serious or lethal infections by impairing the innate immune response. In her testimony, she states, "Questions have been raised about whether mifepristone (RU-486) is involved through suppression of the immune system. This is a question to be studied, but at this point does not seem to be a compelling mechanism." I question Susan Wood's authority to make such statements as a non medical professional.

Still, the most troubling consequence of this testimony is that a pro-choice advocate like Susan Wood is eroding the quality of advice to policymakers and the general public in a manner that is not serving the best interest of women's health. Susan Wood, herself, testifies, "Please do not allow politics to trump science once again when the health of women is at stake." Yet, Susan Wood plays politics with science. Her political quest in the name of science is trumping the safety, health and welfare of women.

Respectively Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Monty L. Patterson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Monty" being more prominent than the last name "Patterson".

Monty L. Patterson